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P A P E R

I N

COLONIES AND TRADE.

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## COLONIES AND TRADE.

In consequence of the following Letter and Certificate, the GOLD MEDAL was this Session voted to ROBERT WISSETT, Esq. for having been instrumental in promoting the organzining Bengal Silk in England.

S I R,

**A**S the article of Raw Silk has occasionally engaged the Society's attention, I take the liberty of submitting to them the following facts, which, I flatter myself, will be found not altogether inconsistent with their views.

The magnitude and importance of our Silk Manufactures are too well known to need pointing out ; yet, although they have been established in full vigour for upwards of a century, our sole dependance for the raw material has, till within these last twenty years, been entirely placed upon foreign powers : and indeed, notwithstanding the great exertions that have been recently

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made

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made by the East-India Company, it will be seen that, even at the present period, we are obliged to have recourse to Italy and other parts of the Continent for not less than eight hundred thousand pounds weight of this commodity, at an expence of upwards a million sterling per annum, one half of which is imported in a thrown state; that is, having undergone the preparatory operation of twisting, to render it more fit for the use of the weaver in the article of warp.

In my official capacity, as Secretary to the Committee appointed under the Court of Directors, to superintend the East-India Company's commercial concerns, it came within my knowledge, that, in the Bengal Provinces (now forming a part of the British Empire), the culture of this article was capable of being very considerably extended: and, in conversation with various persons, whose knowledge was competent to the subject, I became convinced, that Bengal Raw Silk could be thrown in this country, so as to serve as a substitute for a

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very considerable portion of what is now supplied from Italy.

I thereupon submitted my ideas to my Honourable Employers, who were pleased to resolve upon a trial of the measure; and I have the pleasure to observe, that, so far as the experiment has hitherto proceeded, it has answered every expectation that could be wished.

At the sale last week, twenty-nine bales, weighing four thousand pounds, thrown principally at Macclesfield, sold at very encouraging prices, which has fully established the practicability of the measure; and when I inform the Society, that even this small essay has given employment to upwards of five hundred persons, that would otherwise have been destitute of means of subsistence, they will, I flatter myself, view it as a national object not unworthy of their favourable notice. I have the honour to be,

SIR,

Your most obedient humble servant,

ROBERT WISSETT.

*East-India House,  
March 12, 1795.*

Mr. MORE.

SIR,

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S I R,

**I**N reply to your letter of the 10th ult. you will be pleased to inform the Committee of Colonies and Trade, that the plan for organizing Bengal Raw Silk, was first suggested to the Committee of Warehouses, who have the management of the Company's commercial concerns, by Mr. Wiffet, their Clerk, whose merit on this and on other occasions the Committee think highly of; and, in his official capacity, he has been very instrumental in forwarding its execution. Sir Stephen Lushington being confined with the gout at the time of the receipt of your letter; is the reason why it has not been sooner replied to.

I am, SIR,

Your most obedient servant,

D. SCOTT.

*East-India House,*  
*April 9, 1796.*

MR. MORE.

REWARDS